

THE BOSTON
MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

Vol. III.]

TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 1831.

[No. 47.]

I.

SOME REMARKS ON THE PATHOLOGY
AND TREATMENT OF DYSMENOR-
RHEA.

By JOHN EBERLE, M.D., &c. &c.

THE pathology of this very common and painful affection of females, does not appear to be well understood. Some writers, and among these Dr. Dewees, seem to think that this complaint depends invariably on the formation of pseudo-membranous substance over the internal surface of the uterus, by which the orifices of the menstrual exhalants are obstructed. Such membranous structures are indeed frequently present in this disease, and they unquestionably impede menstruation where they do exist. It is nevertheless equally certain, I think, that difficult and painful menstruation sometimes recurs without any such mechanical impediment. I have known young females invariably afflicted with extreme pain, at each catamenial period, for several years, without the discharge of any substance of this kind. It must moreover be observed, that painful menstruation is by no means always attended with a scanty flow of the menstrual fluid. Burns makes this observation; and I have myself met with several remarkable instances.

Dr. Dewees observes that there are two distinct states of this af-

fection. In one, the mammæ sympathise with the uterus, and become tumid and more or less painful: in the other, no perceptible alteration in the state of the breasts occurs. The former of these varieties, he says, is much more manageable than the latter, and this accords entirely with my own experience. The Doctor does not offer an explanation of this circumstance. It appears to me to admit of one. I have observed, for instance, that in nearly every case where the breasts became tumid and painful, the concreted pseudo-membranous substance (if any is cast off) is thick and of much consistence; and in those where the mammæ do not sympathise, it is usually thrown off in the form of a thin membrane. In the former case, the cavity of the uterus is much more distended, approaching the condition of early pregnancy; and we may presume that this state would be most apt to awaken the uterine sympathies, and thus to excite the mammary glands. Such cases too are more readily removed, because much less expulsive effort is necessary to separate and expel a considerable mass, than a thin membranous concretion adhering to the inner surface of the uterus.

Dr. Dewees' views concerning the pathology of this affection, appear to me not only contrary to sound pathological principles, but

most unequivocally also to the import of its essential phenomena.

"In another place," he says, "I have declared that the menstrual fluid is the product of a secretory process. I have there given my reasons for this opinion: I therefore now assume it as a principle; and, upon this principle, attempt to account for the formation of the membranous production, so often yielded in dysmenorrhœa. But, before I attempt an explanation of the formation of this membrane, I must again direct attention to a very remarkable circumstance in the character of the menstrual blood, namely, its not possessing the property of coagulation. From this, it appears that the blood, or a part of it, has suffered some change by the action of the uterine vessels; and that this change has been imposed upon the coagulating lymph, by the process of secretion. I have assigned reasons for this change, when speaking of menstruation. Now it is not difficult to suppose that the uterus, like every other organ, may have its functions impaired; in consequence of which the texture of the coagulating lymph, instead of being subdued as it is wont to be, when the uterine secretory action is perfect, it remains nearly the same as when it entered this viscus—except that it may be attenuated, as in some inflammatory diseases: and it will, from this imperfect elaboration, be thrown into the cavity of the uterus, without being dispossessed of the power of separation and of coagulation. It is poured into the uterus in a very gradual manner; and, from this circumstance, may tarry there sufficiently long to separate into its constituent parts: the colored part, or red globules,

from their greater weight, will leave the imperfectly-subdued coagulating lymph, and fall to the bottom of the uterus, and sooner or later be discharged,—while the coagulating lymph, either in part or altogether, will be left to spread itself over the internal face of the uterus, and these quickly assume, as is usual with it when in contact with living parts, the appearance of a membrane."

From these observations, it appears that the Doctor considers a weak state of the uterus, or rather an impaired secretory function of this organ, as the immediate cause of the production of the membrane in question. Unquestionably the menstrual action is deranged; but so far from this derangement being the result of deficient uterine excitement, all the attending phenomena of the disease favor the idea that the excitement in the whole uterine system is morbidly increased, and that it approaches to the state of inflammation. The sense of fulness and pain in the pelvis, loins and thighs,—the accelerated and often tense pulse,—the hot and feverish skin,—decidedly indicate a congested and irritated state of the pelvic organs. Analogy also affords us good grounds for this opinion. Lymph is never thrown so as to form membranous concretions, except from inflamed or highly irritated surfaces. The formation of such membranous structures is indeed generally regarded as the most certain evidence of previous inflammation of the part upon which they appear. The opinion that dysmenorrhœa is a sub-inflammatory or highly irritated state of the internal surface of the womb, or of the uterus generally, is moreover supported by the fact that all *active or stimu-*

lating emmenagogue remedies greatly aggravate the painful symptoms of the disease. Would this be the case if the disease depended on an impaired action of the uterine vessels? The general or constitutional habit apparently most favorable to the occurrence of this disease, goes also to confirm the view I have taken of its character. It is seldom met with in debilitated, relaxed and phlegmatic habits. Robust, irritable and sanguineous young females, are most subject to it.

In consequence of impaired function of the secretory vessels, the blood, says Dr. Dewees, is thrown out with its power of coagulation and separation undiminished. In what then does it differ from ordinary hemorrhage? In nothing, it would appear, according to his notion, except that "the lymph is perhaps somewhat attenuated, as in some inflammatory diseases. But if membranous encrustations of lymph arose from the slow effusion of coagulable blood, ought we not to meet with such structures in slow uterine hemorrhages where the blood retains its power of coagulation and separation? This, however, does not occur.

I presume that the uterine vessels in this affection are much congested, and in a state of morbid irritability terminating in high irritation or sub-inflammatory action. The discharge at first flows for a short time, but the action of the secretory vessels soon transcends the grade of menstrual secretion, and instead of the regular catamenial fluid, lymph only is secreted by the irritated vessels, giving rise to the membranous structures in question.

From much attention to this

affection, I am inclined to regard it as frequently of a rheumatic character. I have seen it alternate in two individuals with rheumatic pains in the joints of the inferior extremities, and I have succeeded frequently in removing it completely by the remedies deemed most effectual in rheumatic complaints. That rheumatism is apt to fix upon the uterus, has been repeatedly observed. Cazenave states that he has frequently known rheumatic inflammation to fix upon the womb, and to give rise to very painful affections in this organ.* I have lately met with a striking instance of this kind. A young lady had been subject, for many months, to occasional pain and swelling of the knees, elbows and wrists. Her menstrual functions continued regularly. Six months ago, she took flowers of sulphur to relieve her rheumatic affection. The articular pains and inflammation subsided, but she has since suffered extremely, at each menstrual period, from the ordinary symptoms of dysmenorrhœa.

I shall not enter into a detail of the various remedies and modes of treatment that have been recommended in this affection. It may be sufficient to say, that the best palliative during the presence of the disease, so far as my own experience enables me to decide, is opium, with camphor and ipecac. For the radical cure of this affection, Dr. Dewees recommends the tincture of guaiacum; and it is without doubt entitled to considerable attention as a remediate agent in this complaint. I have used it with success in a few cases, though I have been frequently disappointed

* Memoir on the Treatment of Rheumatism.

with its employment. The remedy which I place most confidence in is the extract of the *stramonium*, or the tincture of the seed of this plant. I prescribed it at first on the presumption of the rheumatic character of the disease, and I have had much reason to be satisfied with its effects.

Miss A. M., aged 18, from the first appearance of the menses, regularly suffered the most severe pains at each menstrual period. A moderate discharge usually came on, and continued only for a few hours. She was of a full habit, florid complexion, and in other respects in vigorous health. The pulse during each attack was accelerated, quick and tense; her bowels were usually confined, and the stomach irritable. She was at first bled, and a saline purgative prescribed, with a simple and unirritating diet. The bleeding was repeated in about ten days, and another dose of epsom salts administered. Eight days before the expected menstrual period, she began to take the extract of *stramonium*, in quarter grain doses, four times daily. The medicine was continued until slight vertigo ensued, which occurred on the third day. The menses appeared in a few days, but with much less suffering than formerly. During the ensuing interval, she was again bled to the extent of eight ounces, and a dose of sulph. magnes. prescribed. Six days before the next menstrual period, she again took the *stramonium* as before. The menses ensued more copiously than they had ever done before, and with scarcely any suffering. By continuing the use of this narcotic, in the manner

mentioned, for four menstrual terms, the complaint was entirely subdued. A slight flocculent or membranous substance was discharged at the third period after the use of this medicine. I could relate other instances which terminated equally favorably under the use of the *stramonium*. My friend, Dr. M'Clintock, has tried it with success in a case of this kind.

What would the tincture of colchicum do in this complaint? I have not used it; but its analogous powers with guaiacum and *stramonium* in rheumatic affections, justify the suspicion that it might be useful.

Mr. Patin, in a late number of the *Revue Medicale*, has published some cases, from which it would seem that the acetate of ammonia will often speedily suspend the excruciating pains of dysmenorrhœa—but more particularly those which attend carcinoma uteri. I have used it in this latter affection with manifest palliative effects.—*Western Jour.*

II.

EFFECTS OF BLOODLETTING.*

THE question of the morbid effects of loss of blood appears to me not to have sufficiently engaged the attention either of the physiologist or of the practical physician; yet to both they offer objects of inquiry of great interest and importance.

To the physiologist, the phenomena of syncope, of reaction, and of sinking, present innumerable objects for his consideration, of the very deepest interest. The

* From the Introductory Observations to Marshall Hall's work on Loss of Blood.

influence of syncope on the functions of the brain, of the heart, of the capillary vessels, of the lungs, of the stomach, &c. ; the phenomena of reaction, excessive or defective ; but especially the phenomena and influence of the sinking state, or state of failure and decline of the vital powers, in their relation both to the nervous, the circulating, and the organic systems,—severally present objects for our investigation, in a physiological point of view, at once of much novelty and of the highest utility.

To the physician, the symptoms of reaction, so similar to those of some inflammatory affections of the head and heart, and the phenomena of the sinking state, so similar to those of some other affections of the head, and to those of some morbid affections within the chest and abdomen, present subjects for his observation of the utmost moment in actual practice.

The morbid effects of loss of blood may be divided into the immediate and into the more remote. Besides syncope, from its slightest to its fatal form, the former include delirium, convulsions, and coma. The latter comprise the states of excessive reaction, of defective reaction, of the gradual failure of the vital powers, and of more rapid or sudden sinking or dissolution. The former, the different forms of syncope at least, are comparatively well known. The latter appear to me not to have received the degree of attention due to them. No author has described with accuracy the secondary or more remote effects of loss of blood, under the various circumstances of repetition, or continued flow, in which it may

occur. And yet when we reflect how constantly bloodletting is employed as a remedy, and how frequently hemorrhage occurs as a disease, it must evidently be of great moment to trace the symptoms and effects of a diminished quantity of blood upon the different functions of the human body.

This inquiry possesses a still higher interest in a practical point of view ; for, as I shall immediately explain, some of the most obvious and striking effects of loss of blood, or those of reaction, are such as to suggest the idea of increased power and energy of the system, and of increased action in some of its organs, and to lead to an erroneous and dangerous employment or repetition of the lancet, when a directly opposite mode of treatment is required ; while the state of actual but protracted sinking frequently resembles a state of oppression of the brain, or of congestion of the lungs, so accurately, as to prompt the unwary practitioner to a still more suddenly fatal use of the lancet.

There is another point of view in which the effects of loss of blood become interesting in the practice of physic. I have already stated that the symptoms of reaction from loss of blood, accurately resemble those of power in the system, and of morbidly increased action of the encephalon, and that from these causes the case is very apt to be mistaken, and mistreated by the further abstraction of blood. The result of this treatment is in itself again apt further to mislead us ; for all the previous symptoms are promptly and completely relieved ; and this relief, in its turn, again suggests the renewed use

of the lancet. In this manner the last bloodletting may prove suddenly and unexpectedly fatal.

The next point for our consideration is the influence of the age, the strength, and the varied constitution of the patient, in modifying the effects of loss of blood. On these greatly depends the tendency to defective or to excessive reaction, and to the state of sinking. So that the effects do not correspond with the measure, or even a comparative measure, of loss of blood, in different subjects. Sometimes there is no reaction. At other times the reaction is excessive and even violent. In a third instance we may be surprised by the sudden accession of a sinking state, or even of the symptoms of immediate dissolution. I think the whole of these varied and even opposite phenomena admit of a ready explanation. In general it may be said that reaction is principally observed in connection with strength of system; in infancy and in old age reaction is slight; exhaustion from loss of blood is then most apt to show itself in the form of failure or sinking of the vital powers.

But a question still more interesting even than this, is that of the influence of different diseases in inducing in the system resistance or susceptibility in regard to the effects of loss of blood. The discussion of this subject, and its application to practice, are reserved for the second part of this work.

The next point for our consideration, in the inquiry into the morbid effects of loss of blood, is that of the organic changes induced during the state of sinking. These are chiefly observed in

the brain, in the cavities of the serous membranes, in the bronchia, in the lungs, and in the track of the alimentary canal, under the forms of effusion, œdema, and tympanitis.

We must consider, in the last place, the proper mode of treating the effects of loss of blood, both constitutional and local. This discussion will involve many very interesting questions.

The effects of loss of blood, then, require to be traced successively in their relation both to the central and to the ultimate parts both of the nervous and vascular systems. They involve questions of the deepest interest in regard to the physiology, pathology, and treatment.

III.

CASE OF THE MEXICAN DWARF,

Who died of "Phthisis Pulmonaris," in Bellevue Hospital, on the 6th of August, 1830.

Reported for the American Lancet,

By Dr. JOHN G. VOGHT, New York.

THE Mexican Dwarf, *Don Signor Captain Bicenta Florus*, was of a peculiar and remarkable structure, and the smallest man yet known of the present age. His height was thirty-six inches; his head nearly double the size of that of a common man: his legs and arms were very short, the joints thick, and which appeared, as some have expressed it, to be double. He was 62 years old, of a dark complexion, with black hair and eyes, and was exhibited as a show in a very damp room at the Masonic Hall, where he received a violent cold.

May 21st, 1830, ten o'clock,

A.M., I was first sent for to visit this little man; found his pulse 120, full and strong. On inquiring of his faithful attendant and interpreter, Mr. Dally, I was informed that the Dwarf's pulse was always quicker than other men's, and was generally from 95 to 100 beats in a minute. He was now laboring under extreme difficulty of breathing, and pain in the right side and breast, together with a tight cough, which had been his situation for several days: during this time he refused to have the advice of a physician, and would take no medicine. He was also in the habit of drinking spirituous liquors daily, not to produce intoxication; but was constantly belching up an acid gas from his stomach. He had taken but little food for three days, and had no alvine evacuations during this time. His skin was hot and dry.

Under these symptoms, I took from his arm twenty-four ounces of blood, which was very black, and turned buffy, indicating an inflammatory state of the system. The bleeding immediately relieved him from severe pain, and he also breathed with more ease, and his pulse was reduced to 100. Ordered the following:—

R. Sennæ ʒi.
Manna ʒi.
Sub. carb. soda ʒi.,

infused in one pint of boiling water, and half a pint to be taken every hour till it operated freely.

4, P. M.—His skin was moist, and the acid belchings subsided; had some pain at intervals; no operation by stool from the medicine; pulse again increased. Ordered a dose of Epsom salts in warm water.

22d, 9, A.M.—Found the medicine had operated well, but he passed a restless night; pain returned; pulse 125, full and strong; coughing increased, with no expectoration; skin again hot and dry. Bled twelve ounces from the arm, applied a blister on the thorax, and ordered

R. Pulv. dover ʒi.
Sup. carb. soda ʒi.

Mix, and divide in six powders—one to be taken every two hours, in warm tea, till a perspiration commenced

8, P. M.—Found the skin moist; pain subsided; expectoration free, and the pulse less than 100. Ordered the blisters to be dressed, some gruel for nourishment, and no medicine to be taken during the night.

23d.—The patient was comfortable, except flatulency and difficult expectoration. Ordered

R. Pulv. Rhei. ʒii.
Tart. antim. gr. viii.
Gum arabic ʒi.
Sub. carb. potass ʒi.
Hot water ʒ viii. M.

Infuse over a gentle fire for thirty minutes; strain. One tablespoonful every two hours; and the blister dressed twice a day with simple ointment.

24th.—No particular alteration, except being again costive; for which a common laxative powder of jalap and cream of tartar, āā ʒss., was given, and operated well. Seidlitz water was allowed as drink, with soups for diet.

25th.—Last night the patient had taken a fresh cold, and several alarming symptoms again returned, such as delirium, quick and weak pulse, difficult expectoration, and shortness of breath;

dry skin; tongue foul, and covered with a brown fur. Ordered a blister again put on the breast, one back of the neck, and one on each wrist; and the Dover's powder, and soda u. a., together with mustard sinapisms, to the soles of the feet and ankles.

26th.—No material alteration, except the expectoration more free. The same treatment continued.

27th.—The patient rational; his skin moist; expectoration free; pulse feeble, about 100 a minute; spirits low; he thought he was going to die. Being of the Catholic persuasion, he requested an interview with his minister, which was granted.

28th.—Had seen his minister, and was more discouraged than ever about his situation. At this time, every inflammatory symptom had subsided. He coughed a great deal, but expectorated freely and abundantly, with no pain whatever. He refused to take any more medicine, and said if he was deprived any longer of his dram of whiskey, he could not live another day. A small quantity of whiskey was allowed him, on condition that he would take a sufficient quantity of medicine to keep up expectoration and restore tone to his system,—to which he consented.

29th.—His bowels in good order. The following mixture was already prepared, and ordered:—

R. Extract of *Eupatorium perfoliatum* 3ss.

Gum arabic 3ii.

Ext. Glych. 3ii.

T. Antim. gr. iij.

Ol. Carioph. gtt. viii.

Elix. paregor. 3ij.

Mix: one teaspoonful given in sugar and water every two hours.

This compound was used till the first of June, with no other medicine except a dose of castor oil to move the bowels. During this time, he was free from fever or pain, expectorated freely and with much ease, and no alarming symptoms except a cough and extreme debility, with lowness of spirits. He wished to know what was the reason he could not be cured in two or three days. I informed his keeper that I desired counsel on his case. The answer was, that "he had no money to pay for counsel, and was satisfied with what had been done." I replied, that I would procure counsel; and accordingly called in Dr. Felix Pascalis, Dr. Reese, Dr. Harral, and Dr. Harris, who volunteered their friendly advice, and agreed that the treatment had been correct, and were of opinion that he would recover after a few weeks.

On the suggestion of Dr. Pascalis, the eupatorium mixture was omitted, and the decoction of "*Senega polygala*" used in its stead, sweetened with sugar. This was continued, with no other medicine but gentle laxatives, till June the 6th, when his situation warranted the use of tonics. The cinchona was now added to the senega, and a tepid bath was used. About the 14th, I found him much improved, so as to again exhibit himself before company. He was anxious to get strength more rapidly. Not long after this, I visited him in a friendly way, and found he had taken the advice of some innocent but ignorant friend, and employed one of the "*root and herb doctors*" of the town. He was again confined to his bed, with great debility, profuse expectoration of purulent

matter, and a violent cough. I then declined my visits altogether. What the "root doctor" gave him I was unable to learn; but his complaint was rapidly advancing. On the 26th, I was hastily sent for, as the "little man was dying." He was reduced to a mere "living skeleton," and then in a fainting fit. I gave him a dose of aqua ammonia, and lavender compound. He recovered from the fit, and was soon after sent to Bellevue Hospital, and put under the treatment of the hospital physicians, which I am unable to communicate. He died on the 6th of August, 1830. On this day I was sent to for to embalm his body, to be forwarded to his friends, which was done in the following manner:—

The skin was rubbed with finely powdered alum, according to the plan adopted by the skilful Mr. John Sheldon, in his anatomical cabinet. (See "*New York Medical Inquirer*," pages 253 and 254.) The arteries were injected with alcohol saturated with camphor and spirits of turpentine.

The stomach and intestines were taken out and cleansed; then dipped in a mixture of resin, camphor, and turpentine, and again returned. The weather was warm, which did not admit

of a minute examination of the particular organs or structure of his system. The lungs were nearly decayed, and a great quantity of purulent matter was found in the thorax and bronchia. His liver was nearly half diseased, and was quite spotted.

His lower intestines were inflamed and filled with gas. It was my intention to have injected the carotids with a colored injection, in order to have preserved the natural color of the face; but unfortunately I was disappointed, in not being able to procure the materials till it was too late. From the experience I have had in a practice of this nature, I have no hesitation in saying, that, in the winter season, I could preserve a dead subject to appear as natural as life, which would remain so for ages, if kept from the exposure of the atmosphere. After the viscera were returned to the abdomen, and the integuments closed, the body was put into a cask filled with diluted alcohol saturated with camphor, and alum, cloves, myrrh, coriander seed, cassia, and pyroligneous acid, added,—then sealed up for exportation to his friends. I desired them to communicate to me the condition of the body after it arrived in Mexico.

BOSTON, TUESDAY, JANUARY 4, 1831.

CITY VACCINATION.

THE Committee of the Boston Medical Association, appointed to report some measures for the permanent protection of the citizens against the spreading of smallpox, offered, at an adjourned meeting, the following Report:—

The Committee to whom was referred the communication from the Mayor of the City, requesting the Association to propose some measure, of a permanent character, to arrest and prevent the spreading of the smallpox, have attended to that subject, and respectfully report:—

1. That the measures adopted at

the last meeting of the Association will, as they trust, have the effect to arrest the spreading of the smallpox at the present time, if the same be acceptable to the City Government.

2. That, to prevent the recurrence of the danger, several permanent arrangements appear necessary; and that, if these are satisfactory to the Association, they will require the cooperation of the City Government. The Committee have therefore prepared a Communication to be made by the Association to the Mayor and Aldermen, in which the measures deemed expedient by the Committee are stated. If the Communication, which accompanies this report, be satisfactory to the Association, the Committee propose that it be signed by the Secretary in behalf of the Association, and by their order, and be transmitted by him to the Mayor.

3. The Committee have had under consideration "the expediency of not removing infected persons from the city." The Committee are aware that, if the public were not guarded by the removal of smallpox patients under the present laws of the Commonwealth, the citizens might estimate more highly, and avail themselves more generally of, the security to be obtained by vaccination. But, on the other hand, it is to be remembered that the precautions against the spread of smallpox, which are almost peculiar to New England, and which are very characteristic of the prudence, and of the submission to the laws, of its inhabitants, have undoubtedly saved many thousands of lives in times past; and it is not wise to alter laws from which so much good has been derived, without the most urgent necessity. If the laws and customs on this subject were altered as relates to our city, it is not probable that the people of the surrounding country would be ready to follow the example, and the dread of the smallpox would often deter them from visiting the city, even when called

here by business. Likewise, among ourselves, the varioloid disease would become much more frequent than heretofore, and would be a cause of much suffering, and occasionally perhaps of death. But, further, it appears doubtful to the Committee whether the repeal of the laws for preventing the spread of the smallpox would have all the effect, which has been anticipated, of inducing care on the part of the community in guarding themselves by vaccination. In New York and Philadelphia, as well as in the cities of Europe, where smallpox is allowed to prevail, the caution in respect to vaccination is not sufficient; for we hear of frequent deaths from smallpox in all those cities. The Committee are disposed to doubt whether at this moment there is any one of those cities, in which fourteen fifteenths of the inhabitants are secured from smallpox, as it would seem was the case in our city a month ago. The Committee do not, therefore, recommend any measures with a view to procure an alteration in the laws for preventing the spreading of the smallpox.

4. The Committee have likewise had under consideration the other proposition referred to them, that each member of this Association should give a certificate to every person vaccinated by him; and they recommend that a rule to this effect be adopted. They think that a certificate should be given in cases where the disease has proved spurious, as well as where it has proved genuine; but that, in the former case, there should be added a direction to the patient to call at some specified time to be re-vaccinated.

All which is respectfully submitted,

JAMES JACKSON,	} Com.
JOHN DIXWELL,	
JOHN RANDALL,	
WALTER CHANNING,	
GEO. HAYWARD,	

Boston, December, 1830.

The following is the Address offered by the Committee, and adopted by the Association:—

To the Hon. Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Boston.

The Boston Medical Association, having considered the communication received by them from the City Government, respecting some permanent arrangement for securing the inhabitants of the City from smallpox, beg leave respectfully to offer to the Government the following observations and propositions in relation to that subject:—

The physicians of this Association, in common with their brethren in this country and in Europe, have long been convinced of the efficacy of the cowpox in preserving those who undergo it from the evils of smallpox; and have, accordingly, at all times, promoted and encouraged the practice of vaccination, since the commencement of the present century. That the great majority of the enlightened citizens of this town have placed their faith in this preventive of the smallpox, is apparent by the investigations recently made. It is well known that the proportion of those among us who have had the smallpox is now very small; yet, by the recent inquiry made from house to house under the authority of the City Government, it appears that in a population of more than 60,000, about 4,000 only have not undergone either smallpox or cowpox. The Association doubt very much whether there is so small a proportion of persons thus unprotected in two other cities in Christendom. Of these 4000 persons, it would probably be found that more than one half consists of children born within a year, or of persons who have come into the city within that period. This Association, indeed, might justly wonder if it were otherwise; since the expense of vaccination and

the trouble attending it are so trifling in comparison with its advantages, and since it has been almost, or quite, uniformly the practice of its members to vaccinate gratuitously all who have been willing to ask for the favor, and many who were only willing to receive it.

Still it is true that the city is exposed to inconveniences, and that in every year several lives are lost from the number of persons liable to the smallpox. The Association are gratified to notice the paternal care of the Government in endeavoring to guard against these evils, and will feel great satisfaction in any cooperation in their power for such an important and benevolent purpose.

Physicians, in urging vaccination on those who habitually employ them, are sometimes restrained by the apprehension that they may seem too much influenced by their personal interest. The Association are not ready to believe that this imputation will often be made against them, but, in the proposals they have to make, they wish to guard against any neglect, in pursuing the practice, which may arise from this cause. If the City Government make it their request to every physician, that he should urge vaccination upon every individual not protected against smallpox, as proper opportunity may offer, all difficulty of this kind would be removed.

Taking into view the circumstances mentioned, and others relating to the case, the Association respectfully propose to the City to adopt the several measures now to be mentioned, viz:—

First, that the City Government should request every physician of the city hereafter to propose vaccination to all persons, not protected against smallpox, who may belong to families ordinarily under his professional care; and also request the Directors of the Boston Dispensary to enjoin the same on the physicians of that institution, in respect to the

families in which they may be called to attend officially.

Second, that, to this end, every physician be requested to keep a record of all children born under his care, and that, within six months from the birth of every child so born, he call on the parents and propose that the same be vaccinated ;* and that he likewise be requested, in his ordinary practice, to inquire, in the families attended by him, whether any persons have lately entered such families, as domestics or otherwise, who have not been vaccinated ; that, if this has happened, he propose to vaccinate the same ; and that, if any such person considers him or herself unable to pay the fee for vaccination, he then either perform vaccination for such person gratuitously, or point out to the same the office, to be hereafter described, where the vaccination may be so performed.

Third, that the City Government establish an office for gratuitous vaccination in some central situation, to which all persons may apply who find it inconvenient to defray the expense of vaccination.

On this proposal the Association beg leave to remark that, as the object is the public security, by keeping all the inhabitants of the city at all times guarded against the smallpox, it would be expedient to vaccinate, at this institution, gratuitously, all who would apply for the purpose, without scrutiny as to their legal habitancy, or their need of public aid.

Fourth, that the office for gratuitous vaccination be under the charge of the Resident Physician of the City, who shall be responsible for the performance of the duties of the same ; but who may be permitted to employ any regular physician of the city as his substitute, whenever he is necessarily detained from attending at the office.

The Association are unwilling to suggest any addition to the highly responsible duties of the Resident

Physician, now so imperfectly compensated, in their opinion, and especially when performed with so much skill and fidelity as by the present officer, without an intimation that they should think an additional allowance of three or four hundred dollars a year ought to be made for the performance of those duties.

Fifth, that it be made the duty of the Resident Physician to give a certificate to every person whom he vaccinates, and who exhibits him or herself for vaccination, in conformity to the rules which he may establish in his office ; which certificate shall state that the person named in it has duly undergone the cowpox, or that the result of the inoculation is doubtful, and will need to be repeated at some specified time, as the case may be ; and that every physician of the city be requested to give like certificates in all cases in which he may perform vaccination, and that the City Government, from time to time, supply to each member of this Association blank certificates for this purpose.

The Association will suggest, as not unimportant, that these certificates should be printed on cards, as this would facilitate their preservation.

Sixth, that once in every year, when distributing notices in the city for some other purpose, the City Government should distribute some address briefly calling on the inhabitants to remember the evils of the smallpox, from which, by the prudent and wise arrangements of our ancestors, the people of New England have been so happily preserved for many years, and reminding them that our security in time to come must depend mainly on vaccination ; and pointing out to them the means afforded by the public for this security, to all who cannot easily pay the small price for which this great blessing can be obtained.

The Association are unwilling to close this communication, without

adding a suggestion which they deem very important. This is that patients under smallpox undergo great inconvenience and hazard in the removal across the water, especially in the cold season of the year; and that it appears to the Association very desirable that some new establishment be made by the city, which shall not require this exposure of the unfortunate subjects of this severe disease.

By order of the Boston Medical Association, and in behalf of the same.

WINSLOW LEWIS,
Secretary of B. M. A.

Boston, December, 1830.

The above having been communicated by the Secretary to the Mayor and Aldermen, it was referred to a committee of that body, in which state it now rests. We shall lay before our readers the result of the commission as soon as made known to us.

CLIMATE OF ST. AUGUSTINE.

THE following extracts from the letters of the Rev. Mr. N., now at St. Augustine, afford further testimony of the value of that place as a resort for those who are compelled by disease to seek a more salubrious climate than our own. They were politely handed us by an eminent member of the profession.

St. Augustine, November.

* * * * A large garden is attached to the house. It looks like June and July at the North—everything green and flourishing. It furnishes a supply of vegetables during the whole year. Orange trees around, hanging with their thirty thousands of fruit.

* * * * I think the climate superior to that at St. Mary's. It is perfectly delightful. You cannot

add unto it. I know of no weather at the North, at any season of the year, to compare with it. It is mild and bracing. It has a pleasing influence on the nervous system. It soothes the feelings, exhilarates, and renders the mind elastic. It may be compared to a pleasant day in June with you, united to the vigor which characterizes November. The sky is most beautiful. Travellers in Italy say that the famous sky there does not surpass it.

Dec. 1st.

A most lovely morning. I write with my windows open. * * * Dr. — came to this place on account of his wife's health. She came near dying in New York of dyspepsia. She is now altogether better—thinks the climate has saved her. * * * *

* * * * The *luxury* of the weather—the *indescribable* splendor of our moonlight evenings. Since my residence here, there has been almost invariable clear weather; and climate, in respect to heat and cold, that you would not wish altered.

* * * * There is no danger at all here from the night air. I walked, on Monday evening, between 7 and 10, and met ladies walking in summer dress, and heads entirely uncovered. No one was ever known to take cold from it. This is a peculiarity of the climate just in this region. It is owing, in some form, to the sea. In the lowlands of Florida, all around us, it is very unhealthy, particularly in the summer and fall. Many are brought here sick with what is called the country fever, and a most protracted, obstinate disease.

MR. HALSTED OUTDONE.

AN English chemist of high fame, Mr. John Murray, of Hull, F.S.A., &c. &c., has at length discovered what he firmly believes to be a cure for tubercular phthisis—for far-gone

consumption. His work on this subject, which is dedicated to the Duke of Wellington, contains the result of twelve years inquiry, during which period his thoughts have been exclusively bent to this noble and philanthropic object. In the progress of his investigations, he came to the very rational conclusion, and one which has impressed many other minds, that if any remedy should ever be found out for structural disease of the lungs, it must be some one which may be brought, through the medium of respiration, into immediate contact with the diseased surface; and, when there, have the power of subduing the morbid action, without diminishing the general tone of the system.

At length Mr. Murray believes that he has discovered such a remedy in the *vapor of nitric acid*: and this fact is the more worthy of attention, since it comes from a source where empiricism cannot be suspected. Mr. Murray is well known in the scientific world as author of some valuable works on Chemistry, and has, we believe, been himself a sufferer from the scourge he has striven so sedulously to avert.

We shall take some other occasion to afford our readers a more circumstantial account of this work of Mr. M.

FATAL EPIDEMIC IN RUSSIA.

THE cholera morbus, which has, for the last twelve years, been spreading its ravages in different countries, has recently visited the Russian dominions, and assumed a character of un-

usual malignity. It has reached Astracan and even Moscow, and menaces destruction to other parts of the empire of the Czar. Alarm is manifested at St. Petersburg, and business has been greatly interrupted by the measures of government to exclude from that metropolis, this fearful and fatal scourge. Amidst the political difficulties which engage the mind of his Imperial Majesty, the humane Autocrat appears not indifferent to this important subject. He has offered a reward of 25,000 rubles, 4,888 dollars, for the best dissertation on the nature, cause, prevention, cure, &c., of cholera.

GROWING OF THE NAIL INTO THE FLESH.

MR. RIND is inclined to doubt whether this depends so much on the pressure of tight shoes as is commonly supposed. Be this as it may, when the pressure and irritation of the nail give rise to a fungus from the ulcerated fissure at its side, the matrix is not universally diseased, as in the onychia maligna.

"From an examination of a number of cases of this description, many of which I was enabled to see through the kindness of some professional friends, who were aware of the interest I had taken in them, I have been induced to believe that a very considerable variety exists as to the nature of these affections. In some it consists of a thickened condition of the nail, together with its taking a wrong direction in some part, and growing fairly down into the soft parts. This thickening of the nail is very analogous to the formation of corns, rarely produces much greater inconvenience, is seldom accompanied by fungous growths, and is relieved in a manner similar to that

by which corns are relieved,—by steeping the foot in warm water until the nail is completely softened, scraping down the nail with the edge of a bit of glass, and freeing the toe from the pressure that had stimulated the matrix to too active a secretion of the material of the nail, and thus produced the disease. In other forms of this affection, the nail is not thickened,—on the contrary, its edge sometimes is thinner where it is detached from the subjacent membrane which is pushed against it—becomes fungoid, and thus produces the disease within itself. In this affection, the toe positively becomes altered in shape: it is contracted and turned slightly upwards at the side whereon the nail seems to press; and it is this contraction which forces the soft parts against the edge of the nail.”

The most common operation for this affection has been dividing the nail longitudinally in its whole extent, and then tearing off the offending portion or portions. This is acknowledged to be horribly painful; and Mr. Rynd avers that it is generally inefficacious,—the disease re-appearing as the new nail is formed. In short, he proposes the measure which is adopted in onychia maligna,—the removal of the nail, matrix, and all by the knife. This has been done with uniform success by a particular friend of Mr. Rynd, one of the surgeons of the Meath Hospital.

Med. Chir. Rev.

Deadly Effects of Lobelia and Steam Practice.—A Mr. Kelsey Gray, aged 62, lately died at Montpelier, Vt., while undergoing the operation of lobelia. The wife of Dr. Manasseh Litch, who, as well as her husband, is a practitioner on the Thompsonian system, is said to have been present at the decease of Mr. Gray, and continued to apply

steam up to the moment he breathed his last gasp. “The deceased was enabled, the day previous to his death, to walk out into his doorway; and on the day of his death, before the application of steam and the taking of lobelia, was able to walk about his room.” So much for quackery.—*Auburn Free Press.*

City Vaccination.—In pursuance of the advice of the Boston Medical Association for the immediate protection of unvaccinated citizens, the City Government have divided the city into the following districts:—

Wards.	Physicians.
No. 1, 2 & 3—First vaccinating dis't.	3
“ 5 & 6—Second “	“ 3
“ 4 & 7—Third “	“ 3
“ 8 & 9—Fourth “	“ 3
“ 10 & 11—Fifth “	“ 3
“ 12—Sixth “	“ 4
Including S. Boston.]	19

Being the number designated by the B. M. Association.

The *First District* has been assigned to Drs. Gregg, Strong and Williams. *Second District*, to Drs. Howard, Smith and Greene. *Third District*, to Drs. Grigg, Thomas and Warren. *Fourth District*, to Drs. Stearns, Robinson and Davenport. *Fifth District*, to Drs. Watson, Perry and Bartlett. *Sixth District*, to Drs. Lodge, Hildreth, Dyer and Ellis.

The Mayor and Aldermen have also ordered that the members of the Common Council, School Committee, and Overseers of the Poor, be requested to act in the capacity of designating the proper subjects of vaccination.

The communication of Dr. Parsons came too late for this number. It shall appear next week.

Whole number of deaths in Boston the week ending December 24th, 18. Males, 10,—Females, 8.

Of apoplexy, 1—consumption, 5—measles, 1—old age, 1—unknown, 4—infantile, 1—convulsions, 1—canker, 1—quinsey, 1—sudden, 1—brain fever, 1.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

WILLIAMS ON DISEASES
OF THE LUNGS.

THIS day received, by CARTER & HENDEE, "A Rational Exposition of the Physical Signs of the Diseases of the Lungs and Pleura, illustrating their Pathology and facilitating their Diagnosis." By CHARLES J. B. WILLIAMS.

Dec. 6.

BECLARD'S GENERAL ANATOMY.

CHAVE this day received—Elements of General Anatomy, or a Description of every kind of Organ composing the Human Body. By P. A. BECLARD, Professor of Anatomy of the Faculty of Medicine of Paris. Preceded by a critical and biographical Memoir of the Life and Writings of the Author. By OLIVIER, M.D. Translated from the French, with Notes. By JOSEPH TIGNO, M.D., Member of the Philadelphia Medical Society. Dec. 28.

MEDICAL SCHOOL OF MAINE.

THE MEDICAL LECTURES AT BOWDOIN COLLEGE will commence on Monday, the twenty-first day of February, 1831.

Theory and Practice of Physic, by JOHN DELAMATER, M.D.

Anatomy and Surgery, by REUBEN D. MUSSEY, M.D., Professor at Dartmouth College.

Obstetrics, by JAMES MCKEEN, M.D.

Chemistry and Materia Medica, by PARKER CLEAVELAND, M.D.

THE ANATOMICAL CABINET is extensive, and constantly increasing.

THE LIBRARY, already one of the most valuable Medical Libraries in the United States, is every year enriched by New Works, both foreign and domestic.

Every person, becoming a member of this Institution, is required to present satisfactory evidence that he possesses a good moral character.

The amount of fees for admission to all the Lectures is \$50. Graduating fees, including diploma, \$10. There is no Matriculating nor Library fee. The Lectures continue three months.

Degrees are conferred at the close of the Lecture term in May, and at the following Commencement of the College in September.

Boarding may be obtained in the Commons' Hall at a very reasonable price.

P. CLEAVELAND, Secretary.

Brunswick, Oct. 16, 1830. 4wep

GERMAN LEECHES.

RICHARD A. NEWELL, Druggist, Summer Street, respectfully informs the Physicians and Public generally, that he has just received a fresh supply of the above-named *Leeches*, which will be sold at a fair price.

N. B.—Leeches sent to any part of the city, and applied, without extra charge, by day or by night. 6w—Nov. 8.

SURGICAL INSTRUMENTS
AND CHEMICALS.

STUDENTS in want of the above articles, would do well to call, before purchasing, at BREWER & BROTHERS', Nos. 90 and 92 Washington Street—Boston.

Oct. 15.

ep3m

ABERCROMBIE ON DISEASES
OF THE STOMACH.

JUST received by CARTER & HENDEE—Pathological and Practical Researches on Diseases of the Stomach, the Intestinal Canal, the Liver, and other Viscera of the Abdomen. By JOHN ABERCROMBIE, M.D., Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, &c., and first Physician to his Majesty in Scotland. Sept. 28.

SURGEON DENTIST'S MA-
NUAL.

JUST received, by CARTER & HENDEE, The Surgeon Dentist's Anatomical and Physiological Manual. By G. WAITE, Member of the Royal College of Surgeons. Nov. 2.

Published weekly, by JOHN COTTON, at 184, Washington St. corner of Franklin St., to whom all communications must be addressed, *postpaid*.—Price three dollars per annum, if paid in advance, three dollars and a half if not paid within three months, and four dollars if not paid within the year. The postage for this is the same as for other newspapers.